Reports (QPRs). A national level review meeting of State Educational Secretaries Conference was held on 1st August, 2009 at New Delhi in which the implementation of the MDMS in Tamil Nadu was also reviewed. No serious shortcoming affecting implementation of MDMS in Tamil Nadu has come to the notice of the Government.

(c) As and when any serious issue concerning the implementation of the MDMS comes to the notice of the Government, the concerned State/UT is immediately asked to take necessary remedial action to ensure proper implementation of the Scheme.

(d) and (e) For providing better quality of mid day meal to children, the Government has brought about the following changes in the MDMS for all States/UTs with effect from 1.12.2009:-

(i) Revision of food norm for upper primary.

(ii) Revision of cooking cost (excluding the labour and administrative charges) from Rs.1.68 to Rs.2.50 for primary and Rs.2.20 to Rs.3.75 for upper primary children with effect from 1.12.2009.

(iii) A separate provision for engagement of cook-cum-helper on honorarium basis @ Rs.1000 per month to each cook-cum-helper.

(iv) Revision of cost of construction of Kitchen-cum-Store.

Soft loans to students

†1776. SHRI KAPTAN SINGH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether, on the lines of NABARD and SIDBI, the proposed National Education Finance Corporation (NEFC) is also considering to provide soft loans to students;

(b) if so, the details thereof

(c) by when NEFC is likely to be constituted; and

(d) the details of the working of NEFC?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL) : (a) to (d) A proposal to establish a National Higher Education Finance Corporation (NHEFC) to *inter alia*, provide refinance facilities to educational loans advanced by scheduled public sector banks is under consideration of Government.

World Bank report on secondary education

1777. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether latest World Bank report on secondary education observes that secondary education in India hardly gets the attention it deserves and remains highly inequitable across States;

(b) whether evidence from around the world suggests that secondary education is critical for breaking inter-generational transmission of poverty as it enables youth to break out of poverty trap;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether India's Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) at secondary level of 40 per cent is far behind the average GER of East Asian countries at 70 per cent; and

(d) whether countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh with lower per capita incomes, have higher GER rates?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL) : (a) The World Bank in its report 'Secondary Education in India: Universalizing Opportunity' (January, 2009) has *inter alia* mentioned that the focus of public investment in India over the last 15 years has been on primary education, and that secondary education is highly inequitable across the States and requires more attention.

(b) The World Bank report cites instances of international research regarding the impact of secondary education suggesting that it is critical to breaking the inter-generational transmission of poverty.

(c) The World Bank report mentions that India's gross enrolment rate at the secondary level of 40 percent is far below that of countries in East Asia (average 70 percent).

(c) The World Bank report states that countries like Vietnam with lower per capita income have higher GER, Bangladesh with a far lower per capita income has roughly the same GER at secondary level.

Setting up of off-shore campuses of universities

1778. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has permitted private universities and deemed universities to open off-shore campuses whereas Government run State and Central Universities are not allowed to open their campuses abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government will allow Government run State and Central Universities also to set up their campuses abroad as Indian universities face competition from foreign universities and encourage them to go abroad; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL) : (a) and (b) The University Grants Commission (UGC) has framed regulations, namely, the University Grants Commission (Establishment of and Maintenance of Standards in Private Universities) Regulations, 2003, which, *inter alia*, provide that a private university can open off-shore campus(es) in foreign countries only after obtaining permissions from the Government of India and the host country. According to the UGC guidelines for considering proposals for declaring an institution as "deemed to be university" under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956, it would be permissible for the "deemed to be university" to open academic Centre(s) in any of the foreign countries after obtaining due permission from Government of India and the host country.